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MR. BROWN: The next speaker is La Vonne

13 Selbach.

14 MS. SELBACH: Basically I would like to give a
15 little bit of history of our area. So many of the people here
16 or within the state or within the government are not aware.

17 Of course, people started originally settling in
18 this area because we have lots of springs and water and a lot
19 of other trees, and the Indians like the area because there was
20 a place to live and it's been here for the summer and there's
21 workers -- excuse me.

22 And it originally was developed on the T&T
23 Railroad. T&T Railroad ran through here years ago. The T&T
24 Ranch, which is located in the middle of our valley, had a
25 well. They grew gardens.

1 The gardens was used to replenish the trains as
2 they went through, and then in the '50s, they implemented the
3 desert, they many come to Amargosa Valley. We'll give you
4 land, bring up the water and you can -- it's yours, a dollar an
5 acre, so a lot of my husband's family came from Bakersfield
6 down here, and they were all farmers.

7 They saw some nice land. They thought well with
8 the water and underground river, we will be able to grow our
9 crops and we'll be able to live the life that we like to live.

10 So they dug the roads, cleared the lands, put up
11 the trees for the wind breaks and they developed it. And they
12 did all this without electricity, telephones, gas station.
13 Diesel was brought in in tankers.

14 Everybody shared it. If one ran out, a neighbor

15 brought over a few cans. The ladies probably got about an hour
16 to use that washing machine, so they only washed. They rinsed
17 by hand because they didn't have time to do all that.
18 The couldn't do their washing in a machine because there wasn't
19 enough electricity.

20 In the mid-'60s, electricity came to the valley.
21 This was a big moment. In fact, I didn't live here then, but I
22 traveled between Reno and Las Vegas and I'd drive in, I looked,
23 and I said, "Where did all those lights come from?"

24 And then I realized after I moved out here that
25 they turned the electricity on. So there was a community down

1 here.

2 Since then, all of us have struggled, and I mean
3 in the early years, we had first the war on, and they closed
4 the valley, called us a closed valley. We couldn't transfer
5 our water in and out. All kinds of problems with State of
6 Nevada, fighting with Death Valley.

7 Some of those things were resolved and some of
8 those things weren't. Applications for new waters were denied
9 even though we had the land.

10 So in the beginning, here is one of the first --
11 some people call it the lie from the government, and I'm just
12 kind of showing you how many of us mistrust some of the things
13 that the government has done to us, says to us.

14 Then here in the 1990s, we had groups coming in
15 trying to claim our water, move it to Las Vegas. Protect it
16 for the wildlife. It's underground, but they're going to
17 protect it for the wildlife, and we as a small community got

18 together and we fought it, and basically we won.

19 We lost a little bit of the water, but at least
20 it didn't go to the group called Amargosa Resources,
21 Incorporated. It did remain underground.

3

22 As I look around this room, I see many of the
23 people here who came here over those years and have worked hard
24 to retain this land.

25 I see a lot of -- some of the younger ones are

1 working with the Yucca Mountain. They work out there. It's
2 part their living.

3 A lot of them are retired from the Test Site and
4 have farmed -- I'm going to put this a different way. They
5 didn't. They worked at the Test Site to support their farm so
6 they could continue growing their food and their way of life.

7 Now we're sitting here almost in the 21st Century
8 and we've got Yucca Mountain on one side of us, we have Death
9 Valley on the other side of us. Everybody's closing in.

10 They want to take a little bit of land here, a
11 little bit of land here. "We want to stop you from using your
12 water." You want to possibly contaminate our water so that we
13 can't use it.

4

14 I look at fields. We live on a ranch and have
15 800 acres of alfalfa. We supply that alfalfa to the dairy,
16 mainly, and if there is contamination, it's going to present a
17 problem, going to the mill and so on.

18 MR. BROWN: Five minutes.

19 MS. SELBACH: Already? Okay.

20 MR. BROWN: That wasn't a criticism.

1 21 MS. SELBACH: We here in Amargosa Valley are
22 part of the United States of America. We love our country.
23 We're in the wide open areas because this is a part of the
24 country that we love.

25 We just don't want to see our way of life ruined

1 anymore in any other direction.

2 I looked at this valley and I thought my children
3 would love to come here. They grew up here, went to school
4 here. They moved away. They don't want to come back.

5 They say there's too much, Yucca Mountain, all
6 these other things going on. They don't want to come back.

7 I see some third generations here in our valley.
8 We just got to put a stop somewhere and protect our land and
9 our way of life.

10 Within the last twenty years, people of the USA
11 have come in and made great mistakes, some of them in the name
12 of environmental program and they've taken away our livelihood,
13 our ranching, our farming and our mining by putting endangered
14 species, so on and so forth, and I know this is important.

15 We've got to save the people, and this is where
16 we're starting here. We've got to save the people.

2... 17 The Nevada Test Site did come in, and when they
18 came in, they said, "Oh, this is very safe." We stood up here
19 and we watched the bombs go off and we were told this is safe.

20 We know now this isn't safe. I've lost a large
21 amount of my family to cancer. Whether it's from the Nevada
22 Test Site, whether it was from radiation, wherever it was from,

23 it's alarming, very alarming.

...2 24 They told us it was going to be safe, and somehow
25 we have Yucca Mountain coming in. They tell us it's going to

1 be safe.

2 I reached the point where everything -- I just
3 can't trust them, and I think that in developing the Test Site,
4 there has to be a lot more done than just this small amount.

5 5 I work with the Conservation District. Our area
6 believes in ranching, farming and mining and this is what we
7 want to support.

8 If we can't support our ranching, farming and
9 mining and feeling that we can do this safely, then we can't
10 live, we can't develop, and that's what part of our country is
11 for.

12 MS. DIXON: Thank you very much.